

INDOCHINA

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SECURITY INFORMATION

NSC
3/23/52

I. General

✓ A. Conflict still stalemate

1. No early military victory for either side
(unless Communist China invades)

✓ B. Different from Korea stalemate

most deep rooted

- ✓ 1. ~~Basic~~ problem is political -- people apathetic
✓ 2. Substantial political progress prerequisite for victory
✓ 3. No easy solution in sight

- ✓ a. Hard to reconcile Nationalist aspirations with

French position

Simultaneous progress in both mil + pol fronts is essential prerequisite of any significant or lasting victory over Communism in I.C.

points covered by Mr JFD on 11/11/51 (Twain)

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Chart map with ~~SECRET~~

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✓ II. Military Picture

- ✓ A. Tonkin scene of major fighting - around the perimeter & inside it as well.
- ✓ B. Sporadic guerrilla activity elsewhere - and cut off garrisons.
- C. Comparative strengths
 - 1. French Union -- 480,000
 - of these 195,000 are regular French Army
 - 2. Viet Minh -- 300,000
- ✓ D. New Viet Minh offensive indicated
 - 1. Forces now resupplied and trained
 - ✓ 2. Objective possibly northern Laos; also Delta
- E. Rainy season closes down in 6-8 weeks

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✓ III. Burden on France

JFD → A. Personnel ^{now 100,000}

- ✓ 1. 90,000 casualties 1945 - Oct 1952
- ✓ 2. 26% of officers, 37% of noncoms in Indochina
- ✓ 3. Casualties exceed St. Cyr graduates, French claim

B. Financial

- ✓ 1. Indochina takes $1\frac{1}{4}$ billion. (total military budget 4 billion)
- ✓ 2. Total cost since 1945 over \$4 billion

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IV. External Aids

- A. Aid to Viet Minh from Communist China began early 1951
 - 1. Consists of training, advisers, materiel
 - 2. Scale: 2-3,000 advisers; 5-700 tons supplies a month
 - 3. Indications of recent increase
- B. US aid to French Union forces
 - 1. French equipment deficiencies now overcome - 250 ships since 1951
 - 2. Value of aid in 1953 will be \$777 million.

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V. Vietnam National Army

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A. Purpose

1. France cannot provide more troops
2. Answer is to build strong native army

B. Progress to date

1. For 5 years little has been done to create this army
2. Biggest problem is training officers
3. Most rank and file (total 58,000) are from French Army

C. Current Plans

1. Recently plans laid for immediate increase of Viet army
(Increase to 54 battalions in 1954)
- ✓ 2. But morale low in existing units
3. French may go slow for fear it might overthrow French
4. French also fear this Army might provoke Chinese invasion

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VI. Vietnam Government

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A. Organization

1. Viet Government provisional and in formative stage
2. Bao Dai is Chief of State and appoints premier
3. No legislature, few good leaders

B. International Status

1. International status: "independence within French Union"
2. French have certain privileges
(full military control and veto of economic decisions)
3. No Asian state, except Thailand, sends envoys

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VII. Current Political Situation

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A. Favorable aspects

1. Premier is vigorous Nguyen Van Tam
 - a. Has made some social and economic reforms
 - b. Staged municipal elections last January
 - c. Elections largely returned anti-French and anti-Government representatives
2. Governor Tri of Tonkin an effective leader
 - a. He has made progress in bringing French & Viets together

B. Unfavorable aspects

1. Vietnamese, however, still resent French
 - a. Viets uncooperative with own Government
 - b. Suspect it of being a French puppet
 - c. These attitudes cause Army's low morale
 - d. Also reason for failure to subvert the Viet Minh

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VIII. Conclusion

- A. French argue cannot give further political concessions
 - 1. French say their National Assembly would withhold money
 - 2. French feel their sacrifices warrant privileged position
- B. Situation thus stalemated both politically and militarily
 - 1. French course appears to be to hold status quo
 - 2. Hope for an over-all Far East settlement

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Material Used by DCI